

AIE POUCH

PRIORITY

CONFIDENTIAL

DO NOT TYPE IN THIS SPACE

FOREIGN SERVICE DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR

FROM : Amembassy, JIDDA

REVIEWED BY *[Signature]* 54

DATE

August 5, 1959

TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON

REF : Embtels 73, August 2

RDS for YDSC TEXT. DATE

REASON (S)

DECLASSIFIED ☒ RELEASABLE ☒RELEASE DENIED ☐

PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

9 For Dept. Use Only	ACTION	DEPT.
	REC'D	OTHER
	NEA-4	RM/R-2
	8-12-59	CIA-10 Com-8 IN-7

SUBJECT: Acceptance of Crown Prince Faisal of invitation to intimate dinner at Embassy, August 1, 1959.

Crown Prince Faisal, in late years, has not accepted invitations to dinners in Saudi Arabia and infrequently has attended national anniversary receptions at diplomatic missions. The last Fourth of July reception he attended at the Embassy was in 1956 and on that occasion he reportedly stayed only some five minutes. Some weeks ago I received an intimation from Shaikh Ahmed Abdul Jabbar (Chief Political Section of Faisal's diwan) that Faisal might welcome an invitation to a small family dinner as a means of getting on a less formal basis of relations with me and the Embassy staff.

Accordingly about a month ago while calling on Faisal I told him we would be happy and honored if he could see fit to attend a small, unpublicized dinner at my residence. After some demur at the precedent that this would set Faisal said that he would be very happy to come after King Saud has departed for Europe. When I first suggested in writing the date of August 1 Faisal in accepting told Shaikh Omer Saggaf, Deputy Foreign Minister, that he would come alone without other Arabs present, but he would be glad to meet the Embassy wives at this dinner. Two days later Saggaf told me that in rediscussing the matter with Faisal, Faisal indicated he would be perfectly agreeable if I wanted to invite Saggaf and Shaikh Ahmed Abdul Jabbar, who for some years was at the Saudi Embassy at Washington.

Eventually I arranged a sit-down dinner of 18 with no wines or liquor served before, during or after dinner.

Prince Faisal was relaxed, charming in manner to both men and women present, quite fluent in English although occasionally referring to Isa Sabbagh, PAO, for translation of a word. He was pleasantly and quietly jocular during and after the dinner. Over coffee he spoke at great length of his worries over the decreased rainfall and lowered water table of Saudi Arabia and we discussed new developments in distillation of sea water and artificially induced rainfall, concerning which I promised to cable for information. (See Embtels 73, August 2 and 75, August 3).

He said pleasant things regarding the residence and our furniture and said that simplicity was the only true basis in interior decoration; that he couldn't stand the ornate. He remarked he had never been inside his new palace, behind

the Embassy

DRHeath:jk 8/5/59

REPORTER

CONFIDENTIAL

ACTION COPY — DEPARTMENT OF STATE

The action office must return this permanent record copy to DC/R files with an endorsement of action taken.

6:1.36A/8-559

CIA MEMO

CONFIDENTIAL
(Classification)

Page 2 of
Encl. No.
Desp. No. 54
From Amembassy, JIDDA

the Embassy compound, which has been more than three years a building. He understood, however, that there were ornate interiors in this palace which detail he deplored. Later in the evening he told my wife that Princess Faisal had been responsible for the planning and decoration of the new palace.

Princess Faisal was not invited nor would he, I believe, have accepted an invitation for her. We learned only the day of the dinner that on the day before she had returned to Jidda.

After the ladies rejoined us we played guessing games (this at the suggestion of Ahmed Jabbar). Faisal humorously participated and evidently enjoyed the family playfulness. He stayed until 11:20 p.m., which is unusual since most Arabs leave official dinner parties promptly after coffee is served. As he left he said that he hadn't realized the lateness of the hour since his evening had been so enjoyably spent.

I may add that Prince Faisal quite captivated both the men and women of the Embassy present at the dinner by his simple friendliness.


Donald R. Heath

CONFIDENTIAL